

Advertising.

Practical Hints on Advertising.

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An advertisement that doesn't give information fails of its object. To make an idea plain it must be presented in the simplest possible form. That means merely what it says—the simplest possible form.

Sometimes this means a very simple statement, indeed, and sometimes a longer, more involved statement; but the idea of every writer, whether he is a writer of advertisements or a writer of essays, is to bring out his point as strongly and clearly as possible, so that people may understand what he is saying, and be convinced by it.

Language is not invented to play upon, but to convey ideas, and to facilitate intercourse between people. Different words give different shades of meaning, and naturally the man who knows the greatest number of words and uses them correctly, will be best able to convey his exact meaning.

The best language for any purpose whatever is that which is "terse, succinct, and to the point." Involved sentences are bad, whether their subject is soothing syrup or philosophy.

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It doesn't make any difference how much cultivation a man has, or how much reading he has done, he will receive impressions and information much more quickly and forcibly from short, quick, clear sentences than he will from long, involved periods, containing unusually long words. We have all heard how very few words Shakespeare used in his writings, and I am inclined to believe that most of the great writers have used comparatively few words. Their writings have been simple, clear expressions of thought.

I do not know of any American writer who expresses himself with so much force and clearness as Ralph Waldo Emerson. His sentences are short. He makes use of few unusual words.

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I am not a stickler for brevity in advertising. I do not believe in slurring over any point for the sake of being brief. I believe in telling my whole story plainly and completely.

In advocating crispness and clearness of expression, I do not advocate haste. On the other hand, time is precious, and there is no need of losing it, either in writing or reading advertisements.

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There is enough hard work in the world without making hard work of our reading. There is no use in wrapping a small idea up in a great lot of words, just for the sake of making it hard to get at. If, in the same length of time, a man can receive

two ideas instead of one, he is certainly one idea ahead.

There are times when long sentences and big words are necessary, but these times are few and far between. When these things are necessary, use them by all means. When they are necessary, they are necessary, and that is all there is of it. I do not object to them when this is the case. I protest only when short words and short sentences will convey ideas more quickly, more forcibly, more convincingly.

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Does anybody ever read or pay any attention to the books that are issued ostensibly to advertise cities or towns? They are usually very handsomely printed and illustrated. They generally contain some little statistical matter of value, but almost invariably the bulk of the book is made up of paid write-ups. These write-ups are charged up on the advertising account of the man who is puffed. Not only is his business written up, but a picture of his residence is inserted.

All he has to do is to pay about four prices for the half-tone plate, and to buy anywhere from ten to one hundred copies at a dollar apiece. Very few of these books are ever sold at less than a dollar. No charge is made for the write-up; that is put in free, but the publisher naturally expects that you will take a few copies of the book. The write-up man travels around from one city to another, generally makes a lot of money with comparative ease, and does a great deal to convince merchants generally that advertising does not pay.

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Some of the shrewdest business men are caught on this scheme, and it really seems that no man is exempt. The write-up is generally full of gush, and tickles each man's vanity. It gives the number of feet of floor space in his store or factory, and tells all about his "beautiful home." Each man is a prominent citizen, and each man's business has been "marked with intelligent enterprise."

The manufacturer has always "built up and maintained a well-established reputation for the integrity of his product." A man may have a little 6x9 peanut stand, and still have his write-up fixed up in the most grandiloquent style.

The "prominent citizen," with a two hundred dollar investment in the town, may occupy five times as much space in the book as the million dollar manufacturer who doesn't come down with the cash. A man can have anything in these books that he is willing to pay for. And if he doesn't pay for something, he will get nothing, no matter how important he may be in the community.

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Now, I am far from censuring anybody from going into schemes of this kind. If a man is willing to pay for having his vanity tickled, all right. If he is willing to pay one hundred dollars to read a lot

of flattery about himself and his business, it is his great North American privilege to do so.

The thing that I quarrel about is that he should pay this money for his own personal edification and charge it up to advertising. It is not advertising. It is amusement, and should be charged to the proper account. I should think it would be even more amusing to read this sort of thing in a daily paper than to have it in a hand-somely-printed book that will never be seen. I can understand how a personal write up may be profitable in a newspaper, and may be properly charged to advertising.

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I think that business men generally do not pay enough attention to holding the customers that they have already secured. Their energies are devoted to getting new people into the store all the time, and when that is accomplished they consider their advertising well ended.

It is just as necessary to advertise to a customer as it is to a prospective customer. As it is in life insurance, so it is in business generally. "Lapses" are a great drain on a business.

You spend considerable money in the effort to convince some one that your store is the best place possible for him to trade. After he comes, he is perhaps treated so that he feels that his trade is not so very desirable, after all.

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If a business man could only hold all the trade that he gets, and occasionally add a little new trade, he would have all that he could desire. The trouble is that for every five customers he gains, he loses three or four. Of course, some of this loss is unavoidable. You can't please everybody.

An Appreciated Pharmacist.

At a recent special meeting of the trustees of the Detroit Art Museum, Messrs. Frederick Stearns and James E. Scripps were presented with elegant bronze medals in recognition of their valuable gifts and untiring efforts on behalf of the museum during the past twelve years. Mr. Stearns, during his presidency of the past year, has given a large amount of time as well as money to the work of the museum, and many of the valuable objects recently added to its collections have been presented by him.

Mr. Stearns has left for South America, as representing the interests of pharmacy in the delegation from the National Manufacturers' Association, which sailed from New York, July 1st. The delegation, which consists of thirty members, will visit the various South American republics, the trip occupying about two months.

ANTINOSIN.—Name given to the sodium salt of nosophen (tetraiodophenolphthalein). Soluble in water, producing a blue color.